

Lord Ullin's Daughter

by Thomas Campbell



About the Poet

Thomas Campbell (27 July 1777 – 15 June 1844) was a Scottish poet chiefly remembered for his sentimental poetry dealing specially with human affairs. He was also one of the initiators of a plan to found what became the University of London. In 1799, he wrote 'The Pleasures of Hope' a traditional 18th century survey heroic couplets in. He also produced several stirring patriotic war songs- Ye Mariners of England, The Soldier's Dream, Hohenlinden and in 1801, The Battle of Marston and Strange Turkish Princes.

*your affectionate Father
Thomas Campbell*

Summary of the poem

- This is a ballad written by Thomas Campbell. It tells the story of two lovers who are eloping without the consent of the bride's father, who is following them. The chief of Ulva's isle and Lord Ullin's daughter have fled together and are trying to escape Lord Ullin's wrath. As we read, we understand that Lord Ullin is against the match and hence the lovers have to hide. It has been three days since their elopement and now Lord Ullin and his men are nearing them. The lovers have come to the river and want to cross it but the rough weather is causing hindrance. The chieftain tells a boatman to take them across the river in spite of the storm and promises to give him a silver pound for his service. The boatman wants to know who would want to cross the river Lochgyle in this storm and the chief has to tell him who they are and why they need to get away from there as soon as possible. He tells the boatman that if the girl's father finds them, he will kill the chief and the 'bonny bride' will be left alone to grieve. The kind hearted boatman agrees to take them across, not for the silver pound, but for the winsome lady. He assures them that no harm will come to them and though the storm is very severe, he will ferry them across. By this time, the waters are raging and the storm has become worse. As the night grows darker and the wind blows stronger, Lord Ullin's men come nearer. The lady is in panic now and implores the boatman to hurry up as she is willing to face the storm rather than face her angry father. They start rowing only to be engulfed by enraged waters. The brave boatman continues to row even in the storm. Lord Ullin too has reached the shore by now and as he looks at his daughter surrounded by water, he repents and cries out. He looks on helplessly as his daughter stretches out one hand for help, while with the other hand she is clutching her lover. Desperately Lord Ullin calls her back, promising to forgive her lover. But, neither can his voice reach his daughter nor can any help. In vain he watches as his beloved daughter is covered by the wild waters and he has nothing but regret left with him.

THEME OF THE POEM

- the theme of lord ullin's daughter is a romantic set in the medieval period where two lovers namely the lord ullin's daughter and the chieftain have eloped together and have to cross a stormy sea. this poem has all the elements of life like love, hatred, fear and the tragic ending gives the poem a dramatic ending.

“Lord Ullin’s Daughter” is a ballad which tells the tragic story of the daughter of Lord Ullin and her lover who die a very sorrowful death when chased by her father and his men. The poem begins with the daughter and her lover, the Scottish chieftain arriving at the banks of Lochgyle with the intention of eloping to a safer place. The lover offers the boatman a silver pound to cross them to safety. The weather is stormy and it is very dangerous to cross the Lochgyle in such a state. The lover introduces himself as the chief of Ulva and that he is running from Lord Ullin’s men. He tells the boatman that if the Lord’s men catch him eloping with her daughter, they would immediately slay him. The boatman hesitates because agreeing can cost him all of the three lives. Then the beautiful daughter of Lord Ullin pleads to the boatman; she says that she is ready to face the raging storm but not her angry father. Finally, the boatman agrees to take them across Lochgyle.



The boat has left the shore when Lord Ullin and his men reach. Lord Ullin’s anger evaporates at the moment when he sees his darling daughter fighting with Nature’s fury on the sea. His heart melts and he cries out to her to return and that he would accept her lover. But it is too late and before the Lord could do anything, the little boat capsizes and the three of them are drowned in the turbulent waters of Lochgyle.

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QUESTION AND ANSWERS

1. Why does the poet use words like 'adown' and 'rode' which contain harsh syllables?

The poet uses such harsh syllables to convey the anger and the fury of man in contrast to that of nature's fury.

2. "The boat has left a stormy land,
A stormy sea before her,"

a) In the first two lines 'stormy' refers to two different things. What are they?

In the first line, 'stormy' refers to an angry father while in the second line it refers to the tempest that had taken place.

b) The lady faces a dilemma here. What is it about?

Her dilemma is whether she should face the angry storm at the sea or her father's wrath.

3. Give two qualities of the boatman as apparent in the poem, "Lord Ullin's Daughter."

The boatman is a kind as well as valiant man. He agrees to take the lovers across the sea even in such a terrible storm. This shows his valiant nature as well as his kindness towards the lady and his lover.

4. Explain the following phrases:

a) "bonny bird"- It refers to the beautiful bride and daughter of Lord Ullin. Bonny means charming.

b) "fatal shore"- "Fatal shore" is a transferred epithet. It is called 'fatal' because the daughter of Lord Ullin will face her death as she leaves the shore.

5. Give a few examples of alliteration from the poem.

The examples of alliteration are:

- a. hardy Highland
- b. human hand



LOCHGYLE